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the author that his own performance is not accentuated. Truly, all this is a difficult rôle to play, and it must be confessed, at times thankless. That it can be and is done, I make bold to claim is testified by Mr. Sterner's illustrations.

Many of the illustrators who succeed fairly well in giving character sketches fail lamentably when it comes to a question of ladies and gentlemen; and I refer to the intuitive breeding rather than the superficial qualities of sartorial effects. How rarely is it we see a thoroughly high-bred woman in illustration! Of course, not all the draughtsmen are fortunate enough to have models who are born to the better stations of life; this, I claim, however, is of little material moment, for your illustrator with intuition should be able to draw much on his memory or imagination, or on whatever is called that artistic reserve store that makes his work distinguished.

Perhaps the portfolios of the artist are the truest indicators of his ability, for there, among the scraps, the half-finished *croquis*, the intimate efforts he rarely shows save to the chosen few, one can read his inmost soul, his longings, his ambitions and aims; and I confess it gives me more pleasure to pore over these than to see any number of completed pictures. It is from this source mainly that I have seen fit to select the illustrations that accompany this paper, feeling sure they will give a better idea of the man and his methods. The regular illustrations are the property of the world, and he who runs may read; it is here we can study the man at our leisure and formulate a more abiding notion of his talent. I have thought that Mr. Sterner was more successful with his studies of women, for he secures, as few men do, the subtle grace, the delicacy and refinement of the sex; yet there are not wanting those who find in his delineation of child life that sympathy and tenderness that show him in touch with the innocence of infancy. It is, I presume, after all, a matter of personal preferment, and each must judge for himself.

ARTHUR HOEBER.



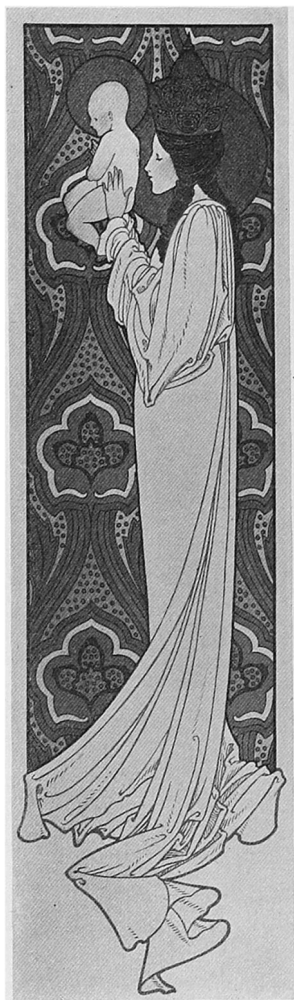
THE POWER OF LINE IN ILLUSTRATION

To write of the broad and vital scope that book illustration covers in filling the demands of the present day would be a very absorbing task; but to define this many-sided art through the phases it has passed since the days of illuminated manuscript would be truly a limitless one. It must be left to the able recorder to some day give in logical succession the evolution of the artist's craft found on the outside and inside of books and in the illustrated papers which pass in a day. So placing the efforts of many unique personalities, whose seeming inconsistencies have proved the bane of the Philistine,

there have been definite influences in the development of illustration to both artist and publisher.

It is now the desire of the present scribe, under cover of a plea for the appreciation of some beautiful line drawings, to write within the narrows of personal observation of the pleasure to be found in one phase of illustration only—expression in pure line.

This essential—a continuous line, clear and incisive, with the infallible quality of positiveness—is, even with these seemingly rigid attributes, a beauty and dominating power in illustration when controlled, and so made submissively expressive to the thought it follows, by a vital something too illusive and charming to reason over, but which is one with the artist's personality and mastery of execution. The misuse of these strong qualities is such a simple matter that a line may be easily bereft of charm and left a prim, formidable, and inartistic thing. Perhaps, with the comparison which these harsh limitations might suggest, one unconsciously finds memory carrying one back to the restrictions of youthful impressions, when a line, as it was once made use of in the schoolroom, was a something unsympathetically straight and quite meaningless, thus, far from variety and charm. It may, too, be discovered, during this flight of memory, that it was not very long ago when a child knew line only in abbreviation and without purpose, for art's instructive principle to the very young seems then to have been merely a discipline in precision and neatness, not, as it is to-day in many schools, something fresh and interestingly broad, so that the youth with imagination obtains encouragement and many ways for naïve expression. These lead imperceptibly to an understanding of what drawing really means; he has then learned that the creation, to



THE MADONNA
BY FRANK HAZENPLUG

hold worth, must be a part of himself. It is a pleasure to find that the arrangement of line, with its rhythm and grace, is now a part of a child's province of study. The system of development which instills this appreciation is thoroughly interesting, and may lead to an artist being an absolute necessity of life in the future. But I fear that with these suggestions my preamble would seem to point to

more serious speculation than is my intention. Absorbing as the stumbling of a child's fancy may be, it is not with the direction of its expression that I would linger, but with the mature understanding of a line's beauty, which men of strangely differing individualities and of different periods have expressed with most consistent power.

Of course, in construction most designs for illustration hold their force and charm in the arrangement of lines. They are the framework, as it were; but in the gradation of light and shade, the massing of color values, the first requisite some-



BROWN MOLL, BY F. O. C. DARLEY

times loses its directness. Exceptions are found in the work of Beardsley and in that of many of the younger designer-illustrators, as in their work the weaving of lines through spaces of black and masses of detail is distinctly felt, and adds greatly to the significance of the drawings as designs. In many cases it is really the essence; for, after all, upon the movement of the line depends the rhythm, which in its grace, or whatever the particular quality may be, should appeal to the eye, and leave an impression akin to the one experienced

when the harmony of some lovely ballad first meets the ear. The idea which such a line embodies and the personality expressed are inseparably interwoven. But this idea, though the keynote, need not be an indispensable part of the motive; for the appreciation of the subject-matter, which appeals to the intellect and not the imagination, is the result of more conscious assimilation. In such examples all is subordinated to the effect of decoration, to the instinct of line. It must be a beautiful pattern, no matter how clearly it may tell the story; but generally such drawings are symbolic or allegorical in character.

In most instances, where the means are very simple and reserved, where the outline in expressing strong character or action gives clearly the meaning to be illustrated, one is apt to absorb so readily the idea, that the fact of its being defined by a line, which in its flexibility and precision has made the expression perfect, is not fully realized. In this thoughtful restriction the purity and dignity of many of the drawings by the old masters hold their vitality, particularly in those which were engraved, or drawn to be engraved, for in the latter case, where the interpretation depended upon another's hand, elaboration might easily have been a hazard. Among the works of Dürer we find beautiful examples in line engraving, where the outline is wonderfully expressive. Then, too, some of Holbein's quaint and delicately perfect portrait studies are drawn with a fine economy of means.

Before the days of printing, illuminators were the first scribes and craftsmen-illustrators. They showed little originality, as their choice for purely illustrative purposes was principally a matter of selection. Generally a bit of some religious picture by a master was chosen to fill the small space which, as a background for the initial letters and the illuminated design, was the decorative part of a page. The lack of creative power was almost equalized by beautiful workmanship and a sense of arrangement; and the perfect balance of a page in an illuminated book is a delight to modern eyes.

Even after the introduction of printing, few great artists, with the exception of Holbein, devoted themselves to the illustration of books. Dürer's contributions were very few, considering the great amount of his work in black and white. The trouble may have been that the artist and wood-engraver failed to work together; and then, too, the printing was inadequate. Though success was made more possible with the introduction of steel and copper plates, even with these advantages the engravings had to be printed separately, and were sold in this scattered way, so that few of the works of the great draughtsmen of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have come down to us as parts of old books.

The eighteenth century appears to have brought, as a proof of its progress, more originality and the names of artists of note into the field of illustration. Yet artists were not commissioned to produce

great works of art to be made one with the letterpress in printed books until the beginning of this century. Now, as we look back, modern illustration seems to have gained a footing and definiteness of purpose from the work of Meissonier in France, Menzel in Germany, Goya the Spaniard, and Bewick in England. The first three, as great draughtsmen, and Bewick, with his innovations in wood-engraving, helped to give to illustration its direction, and it has found its way to present power through varying periods of style, with still more confusion in execution. But now, as never before, is the artist fascinated by the possibilities of his materials; never before has he had them so perfectly in control or in simpler form. There are in use many effectual treatments in black and white, most of them following the direction of the best purpose; and to-day, when skilled workmanship counts for so much, we have examples of beautiful handling which, except perhaps in the purely decorative, is spontaneous in expression and rarely superficial. With all this there is an abundance of freshness, vitality, and individualism. Indeed, as one remembers the scattered array of illustrated periodicals which meet the eye in the smallest bookstore, the output seems quite overwhelming; but to reach the well-balanced standard of the best magazines is certainly an artistic achievement not to be easily won.

In the United States this advancement is very decided, and the completeness of the grasp and artistic charm of the work of our strong group of illustrators would seem to indicate that powerful conceptions and the versatile use of art's best principles will, in this graphic relation of words and pictures, be made less exclusive and a pleasure in the everyday lives of the many. This will be gained through the books and periodicals of the day, which, though in much ephemeral, will hold for the observer of the future some of the most interesting steps in the progress of things artistic.

One of the first Americans to distinguish illustration was born in Philadelphia, that historic town of much substance, in the year 1822. Though his life seems to have been devoid of adventure and pot-boiling anecdote, his purpose was clear and strong, and through earnest and constant labor he achieved lasting success in his work. Some of the best examples, which are beautiful compositions, full of force and character, show the value of a single line finely understood and unswervingly handled. His name, F. O. C. Darley, is associated with many of the greatest creations of our foremost writers. Irving, Cooper, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, and a complete edition of Dickens, with many other books dear to the collector, hold illustrations engraved from his drawings. Of the man little is known. He himself once wrote: "I have neither met with accident nor adventure of any kind; mine has been neither a strange nor eventful history." Yet the drawings which he produced during the sixty-six years that he lived tell an interesting story of creative accomplishment at a time



THE MURDER
BY F. O. C. DARLEY

when "atmosphere" and surroundings might have been but raw incentives to the development of illustrative work. Darley was a great force in this branch of American art, and it is reassuring to find that this man, who was distinctly a leader, did the greater part of his complete and dignified work without assimilating foreign training or a foreign point of view. His talents were matured in the city of his birth and in New York, as he did not visit the schools of Europe until 1866, and his death occurred upon his return, two years later. So that his feeling was like that of the men of letters whose typical American tales proved his best incentive.

The most adequately representative group of his drawings, and those which give emphasis to the point I wish to carry, are found with a quaint and tragically serious story, very intense in its psychological phases. It was written in 1845, by a New England clergyman, Sylvester Judd, and its title, "Margaret; A Tale of the Actual and the Ideal, Blight and Bloom," suggests detailed variations of misfortune, with only here and there a bit of cheerfulness, where the ideal might play its part. This is really a strong, though crudely conceived story; and the clearly defined types, rugged and simple, with the vivid descriptions, appealed most naturally to Darley. He chose this work as a labor of love, and it was long before he had any idea of finding a publisher. But when, in 1856, the full-page line engravings appeared, with only part of the text, they proved a rare artistic sequence in outline, adding the dramatic harmony and finish which the book itself curiously lacked.

We have interesting proof that at the time the story was considered vital and most original. It is in a part of Lowell's "Fable for Critics" that it is characterized, and these are the first lines:

"'Margaret,' the first Yankee Book
With the *soul* of Down East in 't, and things farther East,
As far as the threshold of morning, at least,
Where awaits the fair dawn of the simple and true,
Of the day that comes slowly to make all things new.
'T has a smack of pine woods, of bare field, and bleak hill,
Such as only the breed of the Mayflower could till."

Its sterling qualities have worn well, for the seeds of individuality never perish. The inherent life of the drawings, in which Darley has with such care given his appreciation of this force, prove them as refreshing and interesting to-day as when they were published, though time must add its subtle charm—the enchantment of distance.

The arrangement of the lines for composition is finely felt, but a literalness in the detailed treatment of the surroundings consistently prevails. These are never obtrusive, but add more completely to an appreciation of the spirit of their generation. This decorative significance of things makes them quite remote from modern feeling. Yet, with this separation, they must not be depreciated; they are more precious, as marking the great power and also the limita-

tions of their time; and they have, in common with all serious effort, the essentials which share with the changing characteristics and influencing temperaments of any period, and these are defined with a reserved surety seemingly unconscious of method.

The incidents which make the story happened in the short interval between the close of the War of the Revolution and the first years of

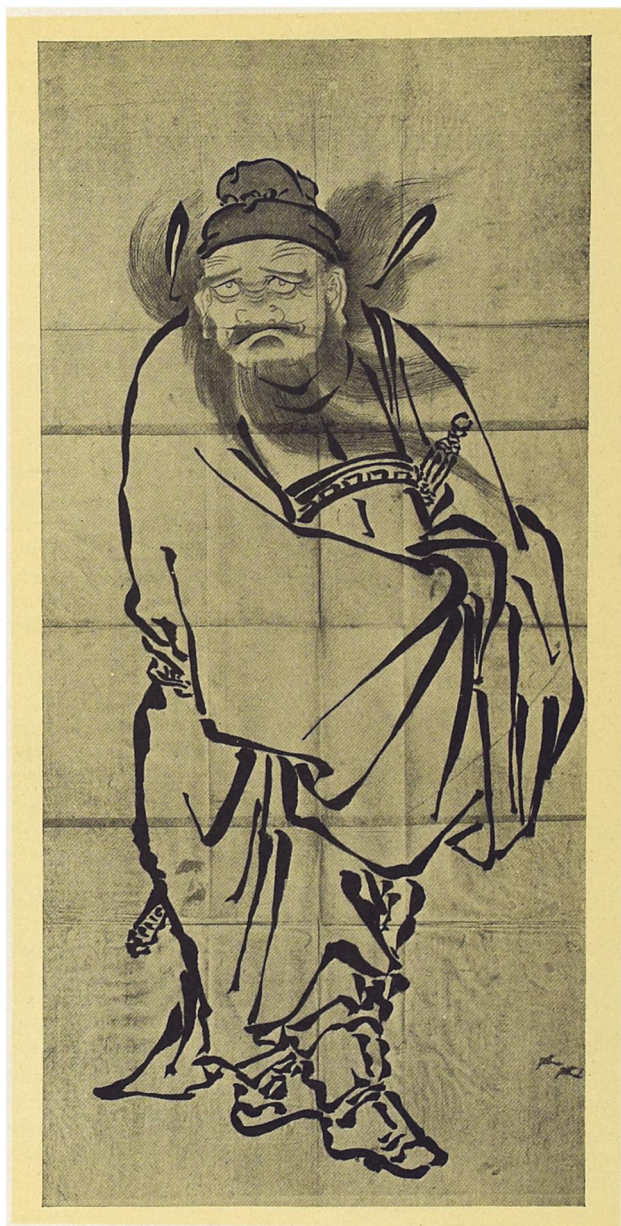


CHILION, BY F. O. C. DARLEY

this almost completed century. They took place in a small town in Massachusetts. Its significance lies in the development of a child of much refinement and pure instincts, in the midst of a rude, boorish household, whose coarse impulses are entirely apart from her nature. She finds sympathy only in the heart of the musician, Chilion, one of her three foster-brothers, and an unaccountable exception in this family of sordid perceptions. Darley gives with beautiful insight and exactness the traits which distinguish the diverse personalities of this strange group. His power is distinctly felt in

the unity of his grasp and in the pleasure with which he has made his line so intimately literal, yet never missing the artistic necessity.

The first reproduction is a splendid character delineation. Here we have Hash, one of the foster-brothers, rough and unkempt, the worker in the fields, masterful and stolidly dogged. The line is convincing, yet never harsh, and its delicacy is finely balanced with the strong accents which with trained understanding evenly follow the



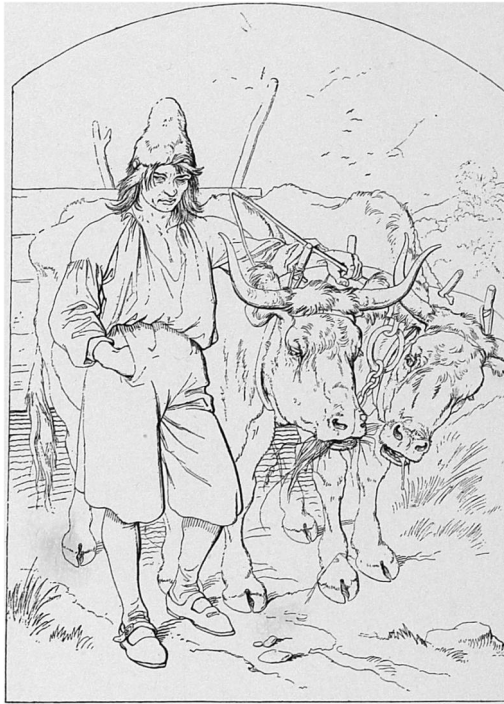
JAPANESE DRAWING
BY HOKUSAI
REPRODUCED FROM THE ORIGINAL

sturdy form. The charming contrast found in the drawing of Chilion is another strong proof of Darley's appreciation of the essence of character; he never becomes involved in the expression or carries the point too far—the repose of dramatic force is always there. In the drawing of Brown Moll, the mother of the family, this is as clearly defined as in any of the illustrations. She was wrinkled, faded, and gray; "a patient weaver, impatient with everything else."³ This simple force impresses us, and we are convinced that the accomplishment, in any art, of a great thing by little means is the source of truest satisfaction; so that Darley's reserved power will hold its own in the many phases through which illustration may rapidly pass.

In finding my way from the quiet dignity of this work, which represents the period of fifty years ago in this country, to the appreciation of one of the most unique temperaments in the art of illustration to-day in England, I shall follow

no mile-posts (for how often they mislead!), or the direction of well-worn paths, but with a few long strides will hope to successfully reach the change in point of view which makes the unrealness of this personality less of an enigma. It is not my desire to become involved in the psychologic significance of this change; but that the ways and byways of genius are boundless I trust I may prove.

Darley has used his line simply, boldly, but with a delicate incision, honestly yet artistically considerate of the text. It is not



HASH, BY F. O. C. DARLEY

for the effects of contrast that he tried, but with harmonious concentration devoted himself to character and physical movement. And Beardsley—is it possible to speak of Beardsley in the same breath? I think not; as the surprise of his strange power is apt to leave one quite without it. He is the satirist of an age without convictions; an artist exquisitely false. Among his illustrations it is the exception to find a composition where his fancy has limited itself to the use of line only. He had a singular fondness for the most minute details,



A GLIMPSE OF THE WORLD, BY F. O. C. DARLEY

and he was a most painstaking workman. The beautiful drawings for Pope's "Rape of the Lock" illustrate this. These he called embroideries, and indeed a rare piece of lace, with its intricacies of pattern, could not hold finer or more delicate qualities than he has woven into these drawings with a pen's line. They belong to the period near the end of his short career; but when he did use a line for itself, no one could excel him in giving to it forceful suggestion and weird grace, ending in grotesqueness rather than beauty.

Some of his early work shows a remarkable feeling for contrasts in black and white—so often more of the black than the white, but where the light is placed with such fantastic charm that the space is

filled with mystery and fancy, all of the strange caprice we call modern mysticism, and sometimes decadence. Beardsley's line-work differs so from his stronger compositions in contrast; these strike the eye by their unique massing, though the instinct of line is never lost, while his delicate work, which is line only, insidiously seduces the eye. They are tender, yet an incisive spiciness has found its way into the expression. With these simple means his accomplishment is most unique, and much like the gift of a musician, who may, with



THE ARREST, BY F. O. C. DARLEY

changing accents, draw music from a single string. Such is the continuity and grace of line in the drawing of Madame Réjane, so simple in its unity, so pregnant with the subtle characteristics of the woman. After all, the secret of Beardsley is there, in the line itself, rather than in anything intellectually realized. He was a decorative artist supremely. Arthur Symons, his friend and most comprehensive critic, writes: "From almost the first he accepted convention; he set himself to see things as pattern. Working, as the decorative artist must work, in symbols almost as arbitrary, almost as fixed, as the squares of a chess-board, he swept together into his pattern all the incongruous things in the world, weaving them into congruity by his

pattern. Using the puff-box, the toilet-table, the ostrich-feather hat, with full consciousness of their suggestive quality in a drawing of archaic times, a drawing purposely fantastic, he put these things to beautiful uses, because he liked their forms, and because his space of white or black seemed to require some such arrangement of lines. They were the minims and crochets by which he wrote down his music; they made the music, but they were not the music."

How differently must Darley have felt when he honestly filled the spaces about the figures in "A Glimpse of the World." There mixed array lends much in carrying the point of the subject. The objects are well drawn and well placed, but they do not hold the significant fitness which is the purposeful use of "things" in the decorative movement to-day.



PORTRAIT OF REJANE
BY AUBREY BEARDSLEY

Beardsley's mannerisms, though often exasperatingly capricious, have ruled with no false tyranny. His intense appreciation of the decorative beauties of Japanese art, and his remarkable aptness in adapting these, have done much to broaden the possibilities of illustration. His personality stands strangely apart, and though he was affected by the styles of others, he absorbed without being absorbed. The different periods of his work show several influences. That of Burne-Jones is often felt, and the drawings for the "Rape of the Lock" tell of the

witchery of the eighteenth century in France. At the last he brought nature into his pattern, accepting the symbols which she suggested. Thus, under the very shadow of death, his work pointed to new developments; he conceived a compromise between the mind's outline and the outline of visible things.

Such is the trend of decorative illustration in England to-day. The element of the real is often lost in the arrangement of lines and treatment of the masses. But the actual, even in its contact with the revival of the mediæval past, finds its way to our understanding through some natural grace of form or sentiment.

Charles Robinson, in his pen-and-ink drawings for Stevenson's "Child's Garden of Verse" and in the illustrations for Andersen's "Fairy Tales," has portrayed the child-spirit, with its merriment and charm, beautifully realizing every decorative attribute of line and mass. In this way R. Anning Bell has, too, suggested, in his decorations for books, the rhythm and fairy-like grace of youthful figures in motion. One might name on and on, so many are there who have chosen this path of imaginative convention, where archaic style and suggestion are made submissive to modern requirements; or where the inclination of an artist like Walter Crane, and others of the same cult, have made certain qualities of the past distinctive features of one kind of modern illustration. This has instilled a new interest, but not always a new life, though many have profited by its naïve simplicity. Through all of this work one finds line, ever the cord of fancy, winding its way with innumerable changes into a unit of beauty. In this sense, decorative art is much the art of traditions. The practice and teachings of one generation inevitably crystallize into the conventions of future ages, when effort is criticised, not by its relation to nature, but by its more or less successful following of the canons of bygone teachers, made vital by the force of fresh invention and the spirit of the time.

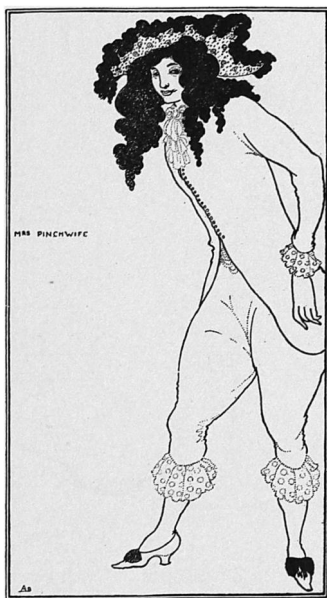
In grouping the past schools and periods of Japanese draughtsmanship it has been found that ten different uses of line, or different



THE COIFFING, BY AUBREY BEARDSLEY

styles, were followed for the various kinds of expression; so much are the Japanese artists of system, a system of artistic limitations, forming a wonderfully interesting code of beauty. Among the motives of to-day in our own atmosphere, where the elements are so widely the opposite, we find many thoughtfully considered ways of carrying conviction with the same simple means, based upon the self-

imposed system of personal inclination rather than that of tradition and purely decorative restrictions. In this way we move back again in thought to what might be called the line of life. This distinctive choice in the use of line is strongly significant in the work of Phil May, one of the most appreciated penmen of the day. Guided by a remarkably quick perception in the grasp of character, his aim is a very different one from that of the men who think first of decoratively spacing and beautifying a page. For the artist who amuses the "greater number" from the sheets of a weekly paper has clearly another artistic object to gain, and few have learned the graphic and live power of line as has Phil May. Still another quality of beauty—that of controlled force—lies in the even care and tenderness with which Boutet de Monvel drolly tells the story of the quaint provincial songs of France. In Spain Daniel Virge, with his direct methods of illumination, has done for black and white what Fortuny did



MRS. PINCHWIFE
FROM "THE COUNTRY WIFE"
BY AUBREY BEARDSLEY

for Spanish art in color. Yet, after all, the fountain-head of spontaneous line expression is held in the art of Japan. The study and drill given the Japanese student has ever led to great skill in the manipulation of the brush for the use of line. There, writing holds a position at least equal to that of drawing, and the calligrapher, the maker of beautiful letters, ranks with the artist. We may not marvel at this when realizing the dexterity which must be necessary to interweave the strong, graceful letters of their alphabet. The freedom and life of the stroke in the drawing here reproduced bring before us, with much dramatic force and suggestion, the Japanese god, Shoki, whose

mythical duty seems to have been to clear his country of all objectionable little devils. Shoki was surely a very busy deity, for he is rarely depicted in repose; there is artistic reason in this, as he appears more decoratively with flying draperies pouncing upon the strangely shaped creatures of his realm. Among European artists, Forain and Steinler have succeeded in mastering an equivalently vital line, always selecting with fine discrimination and clearness the essentials of character and pose. The sweep and directness of Forain's drawing are the forces of straightforward interpretation and charm, without other attributes of decorative suggestion or finish.

Nearly all great artists have shown their grasp of incident in the use of line, but the "filling in" or "finishing" has too often proved a temptation; while a certain kind of beauty has been added, the force and

clearness of the subject as an illustration is missed. Of course, the choice of expression is much a matter of temperament; nevertheless, it is interesting to find that the most lasting illustrations of the past, and the best remembered to-day, gain their graphicness through a reticence of workmanship. It is a difficult thing to learn to center one's expression in a single line, where impulse must be tempered by much consideration and thoughtful training; then, too, the proportions of the intermediate spaces thus created produce other problems just as fundamental and interesting in arranging a composition.

A line, as the boundary of shapes, may have all the graceful flow of a lively fancy, but it needs be frank and definite first of all. It matters not whether the handling be broad or fine, rough or sharp, so long as it is expressive. In this variety of line there is chance for a vital touch which persuades, with keen exactness, a strong personal note.

After considering the humors and varied points of view which



LINE DRAWING, BY FORAIN
Courtesy of The Studio

have flavored the work of our contemporaries of other countries and the masters of line of the past, it is a pleasure to find that some of the most legitimate and richly imaginative illustrations of this nature are the able expression of American draughtsmen. Howard Pyle's work

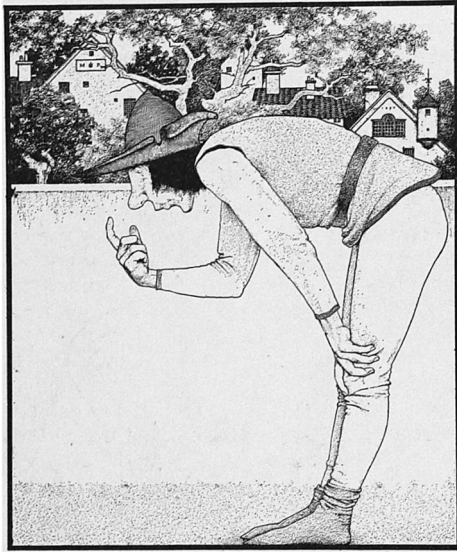


ILLUSTRATION FROM MOTHER GOOSE IN PROSE
BY MAXFIELD PARRISH

in line is eminently distinguished, and has been an influence of very substantial value. Balanced with the essential modern requirements and a delicious drollery, it holds the purity and force of an older school exemplified in the best period of wood-engraving. In contrasting work of the same phase and spirit, we discover the parallel and separate motives of each delineator and the peculiar magnetism each may have in the power of attracting. In this way we find the determination of Maxfield Parrish's fancy has paved his road to success with many of the same

qualities which Howard Pyle emphasized in his "Wonder Clock." Maxfield Parrish's imagination, too, plays with the humors of grotesque suggestion, but in a lighter vein. Surely few line drawings arrest the attention more refreshingly than do those in "Mother Goose," or show a finer knowledge of what is most telling for the process which has reproduced them.

Very significant in the evolution of line illustration, and other clear black-and-white work, are the changes in the processes of reproduction. The printing of Darley's drawings, half a century ago, received absolutely different treatment, much more laborious and expensive than that which has to-day given us "Mother Goose" and most of Beardsley's work in line. The first were engraved on steel plates, which made necessary the interception of another's skill and the use of much time. The result was a very fine one, though it depended largely upon the engraver. Many books are still enriched in this way,

but the process has no practical value, when we consider the mass of artistic publications now on the market which have been made possible through photographic and other mechanical processes.

One of the great advantages of printing from wood blocks, besides the one of rich artistic quality, was that the surface in relief could be printed at the same time with the text. The harmony of effect thus obtained is strikingly evident in the oldest printed books containing illustrations, and it must be admitted that as the process of wood-engraving advanced from its early and simple form, the elaborations it acquired proved quite ruinous. But though the renaissance of this art may soon be upon us, the mechanical process of chemical engraving on a surface of zinc answers the direct need of the present. It is used with the type, is very durable, and gives, with perfect exactness, without waste of time or money, the statement just as the artist produced it. Thus each day adds a fresh demand for all kind of inventions in this emphatic art of pure black and white, and, aside from practical purpose, it charms with the conciseness of a well-balanced principle, where strength, grace, and some caprice, should herald the beauties of a consistent and restful use of line.

MABEL KEY.

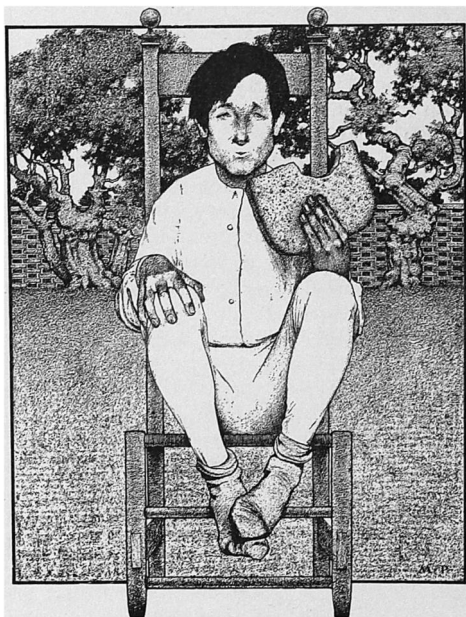


ILLUSTRATION FROM MOTHER-GOOSE IN PROSE
BY MAXFIELD PARRISH

